

COMDTINST 12361.1
AUG 1 2002

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 12361.1

Subj: COAST GUARD FEDERAL CAREER INTERN PROGRAM

Ref: (a) DPM Letter No 213-2, dated December 5, 2001
(b) Executive Order 13162, dated July 6, 2000
(c) Coast Guard Mentoring Program, COMDTINST 5350.24 (series)
(d) 5 CFR 575, 531, 537
(e) Civilian Recruitment, Relocation and Retention Incentives, COMDTINST 12500.2
(f) 5 CFR 302
(g) 5 USC 2108

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction provides policies and procedures concerning the operation of the Coast Guard Federal Career Intern Program (CGFCIP) within the parameters established by the Department as indicated in reference (a). The CGFCIP is a promising new appointing authority to assist in recruiting and attracting exceptional candidates, in an expeditious manner, from both inside and outside the Federal sector, for 2-grade interval, entry-level, professional and administrative positions at grades GS-5, 7 and 9. Use of this new appointing authority should be considered when restructuring professional and administrative positions to recruit at the developmental level (GS-5, 7 and 9), and should be particularly valuable when filling positions designated for Career Entry-Level Opportunity (CEO) program use.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief Counsel, and chiefs of special staff offices at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None

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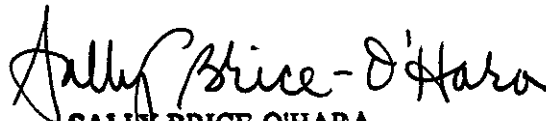
4. COVERAGE. This Instruction applies to appropriated fund civilian General Schedule positions in the competitive service.
5. BACKGROUND. Reference (b) established the Federal Career Intern Program to attract exceptional candidates to the Federal workforce, who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies, and to prepare them for careers in analyzing and implementing public programs. Individuals are appointed to a 2-year internship. Upon successful completion of all the requirements of the internship, the interns are eligible for noncompetitive conversion placement to a target position within the agency. Each agency using the Federal Career Intern Program is required to develop specific agency policies and procedures for the operation of the Program.
6. RESPONSIBILITIES.
 - a. Office of Civilian Personnel, Workforce Management Division (G-WPC-2).
 - (1) Development of the CGFCIP to ensure compliance with law and merit system principles.
 - (2) Measure and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the CGFCIP.
 - b. Office of Civilian Personnel, Human Resources Operations (G-WPC-1).
 - (1) Implement the CGFCIP.
 - (2) Provide advice and assistance to supervisors and employees regarding the CGFCIP.
 - (3) Assist management in identifying the competencies needed in order for an individual to perform the work of the position; identifying appropriate targeted recruitment sources of candidates with appropriate background, skills, or education; and developing the individual training and development plan to identify the core competencies and technical skills needed to perform the work of the position.
 - (4) Make final determination as to eligibility, qualifications, grade level and effective date of appointment for selected interns.
 - (5) Review requests to pass over a veteran's preference eligible.
 - (6) Grant extensions to two (2) year internships for up to an additional 120 days to cover rare or unusual circumstances.
 - (7) Make employment offers.
 - (8) Maintain case files.

- c. Office of Civilian Personnel, Workforce Development and Sustainment Division (G-WPC-3). Assists supervisors/managers and Command Staff Advisors (CSA)/Human Resources (HR) specialists in designing individual training and career development plans for interns.
- d. Selecting Officials.
 - (1) Assist CSA/HR specialist in identifying the competencies needed in order for an individual to perform the work of the position; identifying targeted recruitment sources; and developing the individual training and career development plan the intern will need to follow in order to develop the necessary core competencies and technical skills needed to perform the work of the position.
 - (2) Finalize the intern's individual training and career development plan and communicate to the intern the developmental assignments and performance requirements within 30 days of the intern's appointment.
 - (3) Uphold merit principles in interviewing/selecting candidates for positions.
 - (4) Assign a mentor as soon as possible but no later than the selectee's enter on duty date. The purpose of the mentor is to provide ongoing interaction with an individual whose experience, knowledge, and interest will foster professional development. Additional information regarding the mentoring program can be found in reference (C).
- 7. POLICY. It is the policy of the Coast Guard to use the CGFCIP as a tool to recruit and attract exceptional candidates from within and outside the Coast Guard for selected positions. Candidates should have a variety of experience, academic disciplines or competencies necessary for appointment to internships for the selected positions.
- 8. QUALIFICATIONS. Candidates will be evaluated using the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standards Handbook.
- 9. RECRUITMENT. Interns selected for the program may be recruited from a variety of sources, e.g., professional organizations, various colleges and/or other institutions of higher education, referrals, etc. Although there is no requirement to publish opportunities under the CGFCIP, a vacancy announcement may be posted to assist in recruitment efforts.
- 10. RECRUITMENT BONUSES, ETC. Recruitment/retention tools available by regulation, including recruitment bonuses, superior qualifications appointments, retention allowances, and student loan repayments, in accordance with reference (d) and (e) may be used where appropriate.
- 11. CANDIDATE EVALUATION AND SELECTION. The HR specialist determines basic qualifications and verifies and assigns veterans' preference. Referral procedures will be done in accordance with reference (f). The Ranked order is typically used when the position requires specialized skills (e.g. GS-9 level) and the Unranked order is preferable for jobs that require no specialized qualifications and where

applicants have substantially the same qualifications (e.g. GS-5 and GS-7 level). For those positions, at the GS-5 and GS-7 level subject to the Luevano Decree, assessment tools permitted under the Decree must be used.

12. APPOINTMENTS. Interns will be appointed in the excepted service under Schedule B, 5 CFR 213.3202(o) for a period not to exceed two (2) years. However, G-WPC may request in writing to OPM, approval to extend internships for up to one (1) additional year for additional training and/or developmental activities. G-WPC is delegated authority to extend, without OPM approval, two (2) year internships for up to an additional 120 days to cover rare or unusual circumstances. Such requests must be made in writing to Commandant (G-WPC-1) for review and approval through the appropriate HR specialist no later than 60 days prior to the end of the two (2) year internship.
13. VETERAN PREFERENCE. Veteran Preference for CGFCIP applicants will be granted in accordance with reference (f) and (g).
14. CAREER DEVELOPMENT. The appropriate supervisor/manager will design and provide career interns with formal training and developmental opportunities throughout the internship to acquire the appropriate competencies needed for non-competitive conversion. Commandant (G-WPC-1) and Commandant (G-WPC-3) may assist the appropriate management representatives in developing a specific individual training and career development plan relevant to the position(s) being filled. Such training and/or career developmental opportunities may include on-the-job experience, rotational or other job assignments, attendance at conferences and seminars, interagency assignment and personalized training courses, as appropriate. A sample individual training and career development plan is provided at enclosure (l).
15. PROMOTIONS. During the internship period, participants in the program will receive promotions, in accordance with established career-ladder requirements, satisfactory performance and successful completion of developmental requirements. This provision does not confer entitlement to promotion. Time-in-grade is not required for advancement in the excepted service.
16. CONVERSION TO COMPETITIVE SERVICE. Except as provided in paragraph 16(b) below, service as an intern shall confer no rights to further Federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon the expiration of the internship period.
 - a. Appointment in the competitive civil service may be granted to career interns who successfully complete their internships and meet all qualifications, suitability and performance requirements for the position. These noncompetitive conversions will be effective on the date the 2-year service requirement is met or at the end of the extended period.
 - b. An employee who held a career or career-conditional appointment in the CG immediately before entering the CGFCIP, and who fails to successfully complete the Program for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability shall be placed in a career or career-conditional position within the CG at a grade or pay rate no lower than the one the employee left to accept the position in the Program.

- c. An employee who held a career or career-conditional appointment in another DOT operating administration or other federal agency immediately before entering the CGFCIP and who fails to successfully complete the program will have no return rights and will be separated.
 - d. Service under the Career Intern Program is creditable towards completion of career tenure in the competitive service, if the career intern is converted to a career-conditional appointment.
17. TERMINATIONS. The appointment of a career intern expires at the end of the 2-year internship period, or any granted extensions. If an employee is not converted to a career or career-conditional appointment, the career intern appointment terminates and the intern is separated, unless specifically eligible for placement under paragraph 16(b).


SALLY BRICE-O'HARA
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Director of Personnel Management

Enclosure: (1) Sample Individual Training and Career Development Plan

SAMPLE
Coast Guard Federal Career Intern Program (CGFCIP)
Individual Training and Career Development Plan
Contract Specialist, GS-1102

Candidates selected for the Program will receive training and developmental opportunities to assist them in meeting the competencies needed for promotion and/or conversion to the Contract Specialist, GS-1102-11, position. Listed below are the competencies that need to be met for promotion and an outline of the training and development opportunities that will be utilized to meet these competencies.

Training Objectives – Competencies

GS-1102-7:

Competencies needed at this level require:

- Ability to communicate orally and interact with officials.
- Ability to communicate in writing to prepare non-complex internal and contract documents.
- Basic knowledge of resources available and skill in methods for identifying sources of supply sufficient to identify potential suppliers, assure adequate competition, and evaluate offerors' responsiveness and responsibility prior to contract award.
- Skill in interpreting, explaining, and applying directives.
- Ability to set priorities in order to manage multiple requirements to completion within tight deadlines.
- Knowledge of the goals and objectives and relationships of the assigned program with other key functions within the agency.
- Knowledge of contracting laws, regulations, principles, policies, and procedures to support solicitation and contract operations.

GS-1102-9:

In addition to the competencies described for the GS-7 level, assignments at this level require:

- Knowledge of contracting laws, regulations, principles, policies, and procedures to develop and issue solicitations and contracts.
- Ability to communicate in writing in performing administrative analysis work.
- Ability to communicate orally in performing administrative analysis work.
- Knowledge of commonly used contract types and required clauses to plan and/or carry out the procurement.
- Skill in solving practical problems as they relate to the development of specifications or delivery of supplies or services.
- Knowledge of business practices and market conditions applicable to program and technical requirements sufficient to evaluate contractor responsibility and cost competitiveness prior to contract award.

- Skill in basic negotiations to support lead contract specialists in contract negotiations.

Training and development opportunities to assist the intern in meeting the competencies for further growth to the full performance level, GS-1102-13, will be locally funded and outlined in a separate individual development plan.

Supervisory Expectations

It is expected that at the completion of 1-year in-grade, prior to promotion to the next higher grade level, that the intern will have accomplished all of the competencies for their current grade level and have successfully completed all training classes taken.

Training and development opportunities provided to the candidates will include but are not limited to the following:

Mentor

Each participant will be assigned a mentor. The mentor will provide on-the-job training to the intern.

On-the-Job Training / Developmental Assignments

During the 2-year program, interns will be assigned a mentor, or “shadow Contracting Officer” to provide on-the-job training covering all aspects of planning, solicitation, award, and contract administration phases of the acquisition process. This will include acquisition planning, market research, preparing solicitations, analyzing bids and proposals, preparing pre and price negotiation memoranda, participating in negotiation sessions, preparing contract award documentation, and reviewing procurement policy.

Formal Classroom Training

Below is a listing of the mandatory training courses necessary for Acquisition Certification under the Department of Transportation’s Acquisition Career Development Policy for Contracting Professionals. These courses are available through the Defense Acquisition University (DAU).

Level I (GS 5/7)

CON 101 - Fundamentals of Contracting
CON 104 - Fundamentals of Contract Pricing

Level II (GS 9-12)

CON 202 - Intermediate Contracting
CON 204 - Intermediate Contract Pricing
CON 210 - Government Contract Law

Although efforts will be initiated to place interns in as many DAU courses as possible during the 2-year program, it is unlikely that all five courses will be made available since the Coast Guard is limited on the number of slots provided during any given fiscal year.

In addition to training in the specialized field of contracting, interns will be afforded the opportunity to attend training necessary to develop skills as “Business Advisors”, such as Effective Communications with Customers.

Rotational Assignments

During the 2-year program, interns will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences in Coast Guard procurement policy and operations. For the first nine months, interns will be assigned to one of the G-ACS operational divisions. Following the ACS assignment, a six-month rotation to a selected CG field contracting activity followed by three months back in G-ACS, three months in a procurement policy organization, and the final three months in G-ACS is envisioned.

Upon successful completion of the program, the participant will be promoted to a GS-1102-11 position within ACS.